Reviewer's report

Title: Echocardiography may be useful to detect pulmonary vasculopathy in early stage of pulmonary artery hypertension associated to systemic sclerosis

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Reviewer: Rosa Sicari

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting manuscript addressing an important clinical issue such as the development of pulmonary hypertension in patients with systemic sclerosis. However, there are several limitations that authors should address:

1. It is not clear the aim of the study. Pulmonary hypertension may develop at some stage of the systemic sclerosis. Authors should give more details on the population under investigation: selection criteria; stage of disease etc.

2. The assessment of pulmonary pressure by echocardiography can be misleading not only for bad alignment of the Doppler but can be underestimated due to the equalization of pressure between the right atrium and ventricle. It would be interesting to have these data separated when assessing the correlation between echo and the invasive assessment.

3. Echocardiography remains a mainstay for the assessment of pulmonary pressure, especially in follow-up studies. However, the evaluation of the right ventricle remains difficult. Do authors have any data on 3D echocardiography or cardiac magnetic resonance? If not please address these limitation in the discussion section of the manuscript.

4. Figure should be extensively revised (some of them have not been translated into English). The way correlation is displayed is not according to conventional statistical methodology but simply by separating several parameters into two categories of the NYHA class.

5. The English language should be extensively revised.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'